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Contents for Week of February 4, 1929. Vol. VII. No. 28.

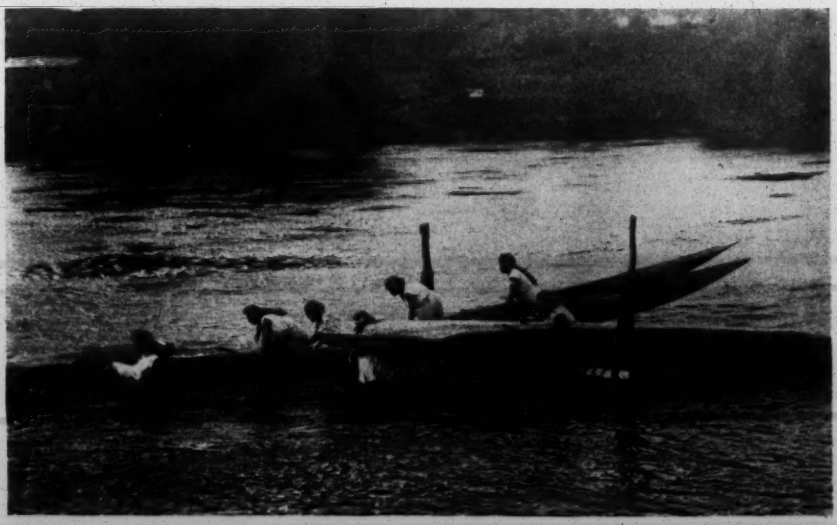
1. Air Mail to the Bahamas.

2. The Tribes of Afghanistan and Its Borderlands.

3. Belgrade, Yugoslavian Capital, Where the King Took Control.

4. Cuba's Sugar Bowl.

5. Kauri Gum, Important Product of New Zealand.



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AN UPSET IN A MAORI WOMEN'S HURDLE BOAT RACE

(See Bulletin No. 5)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Air Mail to the Bahamas

LAST year Colonel Lindbergh turned our eyes to the Antilles when he made his famous pioneer circle tour.

This year the extension of air mail service to the Bahamas, Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Porto Rico again turn attention to the islands of the West Indies.

One air mail line will serve Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Porto Rico. A separate service will ply between Miami and Nassau in the Bahamas.

The nearest of the Bahamas are a figurative stone's throw from the coast of Florida. A powerful motor boat can cover the distance in an hour or so. But the most remote members of the group lie nearly 800 miles farther to the southeast. They consist of 25 fairly large, inhabited islands and thousands of small keys and rocks. Cables touch only the two extremes of the long archipelago. Steamers call only at the two islands on either end of the chain and at one intermediate isle. Between these contact points with the outside world the islands are scattered widely, and some of them are heard from far less frequently in the nearby United States than are South Sea groups thousands of miles away.

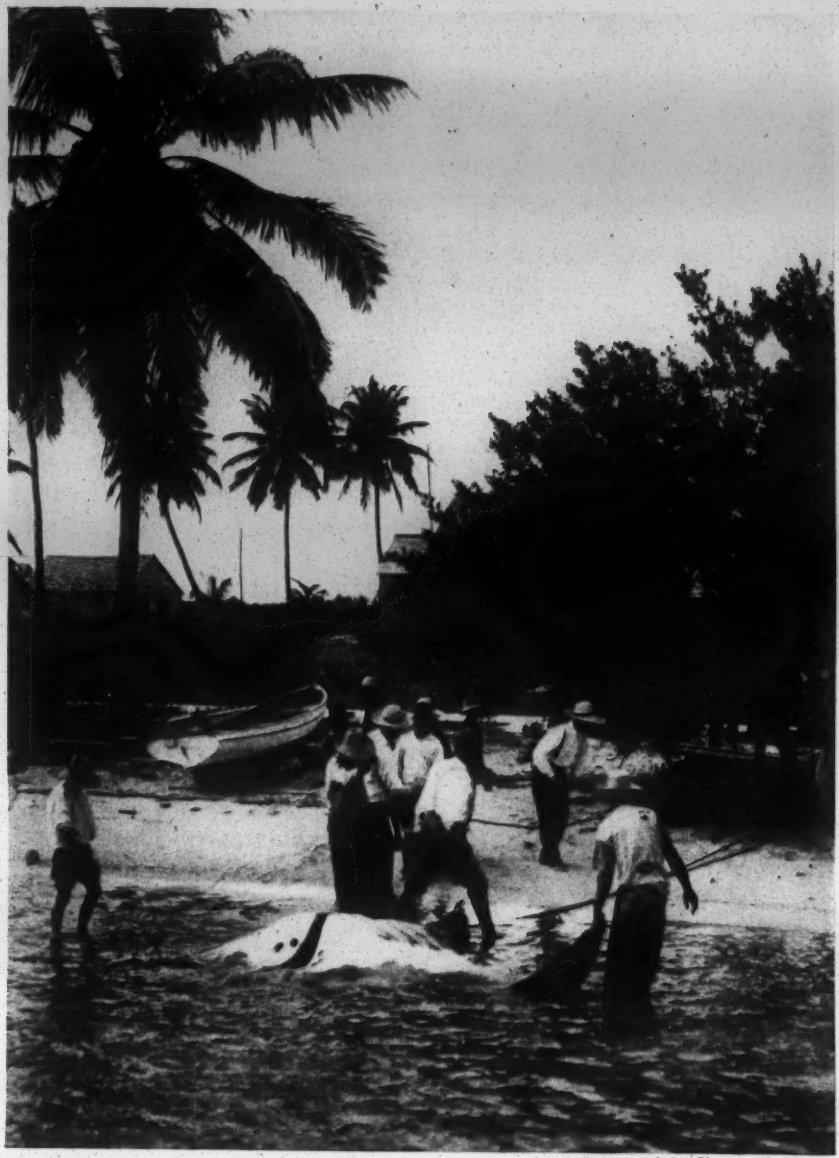
Nassau 145 Miles East of Miami, Florida

Most of the approximately 60,000 inhabitants of the Bahamas are negroes, and on the "out islands," as those away from the island of New Providence are called, many of them live simple, primitive lives. The majority of the negroes make their living in one way or another from the sea as fishermen, sponge divers and dealers, catchers of turtles, and salt "rakers." Coconuts grow on many of the islands, and on a few the Bahamans cultivate the large sisal hemp. Pineapples are a specialty on Eleuthera, east of Nassau.

To most visitors the little island of New Providence and its port, Nassau, the capital of the Bahamas, stand for the "stepping stone" archipelago. New Providence is fenced off from the Atlantic on the east and from the Florida Straits on the west by large islands. Nassau, on the north side of the island, has an excellent harbor of its own. In this favored position the only city of the Bahamas has grown up. Its population of 12,500 is more than one-fifth that of the entire island group. About one-fifth of Nassau's resident population consists of whites; but the proportion increases greatly during the winter months when hundreds of sojourners arrive from the United States and Canada to enjoy the equable climate which has long been the city's chief stock in trade. Nassau lies 145 miles east of Miami, Florida, and is connected with that city by a line of small passenger steamers.

The architecture of Nassau is not striking, but there is a certain charm to its low houses surrounded by coconut palms and bananas, and its gardens splashed with the colors of tropical flowers. Behind the harbor rises one of the infrequent hills to be found in the Bahamas, and up this gentle slope the city has grown. Gleaming white coral roads lead into the country, which is, however, rather bare and unattractive. On the edge of the town is a golf course.

Nassau is thoroughly British, but its welfare has often been closely linked with happenings in the United States. One of its earliest influxes of white population came after the American Revolution, when numerous families of



© *Photograph by Charles W. Kotcher*

LANDING A 4,000-POUND GIANT DEVIL-FISH AT BIMINI

Inhabitants of the islands of the Bahamas live largely by the products of the sea and the tourist trade. The warm Gulf Stream lapping the shores of the many islands swarms with fish, big and little. This monster towed a 25-foot motor boat for many miles at the rate of 10 miles an hour (See Bulletin No. 1).

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The Tribes of Afghanistan and Its Borderlands

CIVIL war in Afghanistan is a tribal conflict. Certain Afghan tribes supported Amanullah, the King of Afghanistan, whose progressive measures have made enemies of other backward but sharp-shooting mountain clans.

The eastern Himalayas is a land of combative tribes. The chiefs are all-powerful. Tribes spill over the Afghan border into India, giving the British Government a hard task as policeman. The air forces which brought foreigners safely out of Kabul concentrate on the northwest Indian border to keep order among these clans.

Where the Physically Fit Have Survived

The tribes inhabit the jumble of land between the Indus and the Oxus. Malaria has left its mark on many, but the fittest have survived. Climate and famine, knife and *jezail* (long gun) have disposed of the weaklings. Neither Afghan nor Briton has ever been able completely to subdue the freedom-living mountaineers who inhabit this rabbit-hutch of warlike clans.

In Ceylon, an Afghan is an outlander who wears wide trousers and a peaked cap inside his huge turban, whose business is that of banker, and whose word is as good as gold. Along the northwest frontier a Pathan is an Afghan who has taken up residence inside the uncertain boundary line of India. There is a considerable confusion of terms and there are so many tribes and sub-tribes that even authorities admit their inability to trace the language and racial divisions.

Language and a Coat Help Knit Tribes

One might call the region the land of *Pushto* and *postin* for *Pushto* is the language which binds most of the tribes together even more closely than their Mohammedan religion. The *postin*, a yellow sheep-skin coat, with the wool inside, with elaborate embroidery upon it and an odor which cold alone can kill, is as distinctive a feature of the winter costume as are the wide trousers or peaked skull-cap wrapped round with a white *lungi* (scarf) with flowing ends.

The Pathans claim descent from the lost tribes of Israel, who were carried captive into Media by Nebuchadnezzar. That makes them close relatives of the Durani Afghans, whose dynasty still rules Afghanistan. But there are Pathans and Pathans, and locally at least they are called by other names.

"The Finest Skirmisher in the World"

Who has not heard of the Afridi, the finest skirmisher in the world? Taught to distrust all men, especially his near relatives, the Afridi parent baptizes his infant in burglary by passing it through such a hole in the mud wall as the thief is wont to cut and admonishing it to "Be a thief, be a thief." His rule is "Strike first, or you may not strike at all." Crafty, treacherous, fearless, the Afridi is a true Pathan.

The man who wins deepest admiration is the Ghilzai, upon whose caravans the frontier trade depends. Once his dynasty ruled Persia. Now descendants weave the shuttle of trade back and forth between Central Asia and the Indian plains, bringing the rich rugs of Bokhara and Persian pussy-cats past the stern walls of Fort Jamrud to the Kabuli Bazaar in Peshawar. Tricky as a

UMI

British loyalists moved to New Providence and neighboring islands from the Southern colonies. They took their slaves with them, and from these the greater part of the black population of the islands sprung. During the Civil War, Nassau became an important headquarters for blockade runners, who took shiploads of munitions into southern harbors and brought out cargoes of cotton for England.

Land Columbus Sighted Was One of the Bahamas

In so far as contacts with Europe are concerned, the Bahamas can claim a history matched by no bit of American soil. It was on the eastern shore of one of the "out islands" that Columbus made his epochal land fall on October 12, 1492. Which of the Bahamas the Great Navigator first saw and touched has been the subject of controversy for centuries. The native name of the island was Guanahani, but this was lost. Cat Island was accepted as the landing place for a long time, and to-day its easternmost extremity is named Columbus Point. Later the claims of Watling Island or San Salvador were advanced. Grand Turk has also been put forward as the first bit of New World territory to fall under European eyes. Watling Island seems to fit best the description of Columbus, who speaks of a lake at the center.

Bulletin No. 1, February 4, 1929.

NOTE: The following illustrated articles on the West Indies may be referred to in the *National Geographic Magazine:* "To Bogota and Back by Air," by Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, May, 1928; "Cuba—The Sugar Mill of the Antilles," July, 1920; Haiti (3 articles), December, 1920; Dominican Republic, "Wards of the United States," August, 1916; "Porto Rico, the Gate of Riches," December, 1924, and "Countries of the Caribbean," February, 1913. With the last mentioned number was published The Society's large-scale map of the Countries of the Caribbean.

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NOW YOU CAN SEE THE WEST INDIES FROM THE AIR

This is Port-au-Prince, capital of Haiti, as Colonel Lindbergh saw it when he hopped from Santo Domingo. The new air mail service out of Miami, Florida, will serve Port-au-Prince. The Republic of Haiti occupies the west end of the Island of Haiti.

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Belgrade, Yugoslavian Capital, Where the King Took Control

AS A CLIMAX to long months of dissension in Yugoslavia, King Alexander has dismissed both the cabinet and the legislature. He was a constitutional monarch like the King of England; now he has taken the position of governing monarch with absolute authority.

The demand of the province of Croatia for autonomy (self-government) was a factor in prompting the King to make his proclamation which startled Belgrade, his capital.

A City on Belgrade's Site Was Inevitable

It was inevitable that there should be an important city on the site of Belgrade. It is situated on the angle of land between the Save and Danube at the meeting point of those two important rivers. At the very apex of the triangle is a chalk cliff, some 200 feet high. This became a fortress and citadel as early as the third century B. C., when Celtic tribes established Belgrade's predecessor, the town of Singidunum.

Through the centuries that have passed, this rock has played an important part in European affairs. It was held successively by Celts, Romans, Huns, Goths, Bulgarians, Byzantines, Hungarians, Serbians, and Austrians. One of its most important holders was the Turks. From 1521 until little more than half a century ago it was in Turkish hands, except for short periods, and was Islam's northernmost possession in the lands of Christendom. The Turkish garrison finally withdrew in 1866, when Serbia became practically independent.

City Has Experienced Building Boom

Belgrade is sometimes known by the older form, Beograd. The name means "white city," an appropriate name, the observer feels, when he sees the white cliff of the citadel and sundry white towers and walls. Even in the days when Belgrade's streets were narrow, dirty, oriental ways, the view from across the Danube or from its waters was a charming one. The aspect of the city has changed greatly in recent years, and it has little now to distinguish it from other European capitals. Since the World War there has been a marked building boom, stimulated in part by laws holding new dwellings tax-free for 25 years, and other new structures for shorter terms. The population of the capital, drawn from a much greater area than that of pre-war Serbia, has more than doubled. It is now estimated at 250,000.

Old Russia at times sought influence over Serbia, the blood of whose people is also Slavic. For one of the principal thoroughfares Tsar Nicholas gave the paving, having it laid by Russian laborers. The street was renamed Tsaritza, and bears that name to-day. At 5 o'clock each afternoon police clear the street of carriages and automobiles, and the promenading populace fills the space from curb to curb, many dropping into the chairs of the sidewalk cafes for coffee and conversation. It is an interesting, colorful spectacle, this afternoon parade on Tsaritza Street, with the promenaders running the gamut from peasant to state official.

In addition to its wars and sieges, Belgrade has had its stark tragedies. In 1868, Prince Michael, who had brought about the evacuation of the Turks and had given Serbia its first taste of independence for centuries, was assassinated

gypsy in horse-trading, full of contempt for the Hindu and of fellow feeling for the Sikh, warriors by courage, robbers by nature, traders by profession, the Ghilzais are a manly lot whose early forbears, of Turkish origin, lived in the Central Asian lands whence they bring down the dried fruits of Murghab and the Zarafshan. Tramping along with his heavy-necked camels, his powerful chest bared to sun and wind, the Ghilzai is a fine figure of a man, one who, dropped among the flat-faced peoples of the South, could well be thought a god.

Afghan Must Win His Spurs before He Takes a Wife

Manhood is the first requisite of one who hopes to join an Afghan tribe. He must win his spurs before he is given a wife and his share in the tribal lands.

Behind the coat of dirt which is the right of every tribesman except on durbar celebration days both men and women are more than ordinarily good looking. Warrior, freebooter, marauder, thief, the true Afghan will not keep a shop or learn a trade. The hills are his brothers, his knife his bosom friend, his matchlock his protector. He may lend himself to this faction or that, to empire or democracy, to progress or destruction. But above every other interest is his desire for independence. Divided into two classes according to whether he dwells in mud-walled house or heavy tent, the heritage he seeks is still the open spaces where he overlooks the plains and friendly contact with the barren, rugged slopes of his eternal hills.

Bulletin No. 2, February 4, 1929.

© Photograph by P. O. Crawford

ALL ABOARD FOR THE KHYBER PASS

Although the British built a road from Peshawar to Kabul, the wools, hides and silk that Afghanistan ships to India are carried by camels or the stout-shouldered horses. The 33-mile pass, cutting through steep cliffs, sometimes narrowing to 15 feet, guarded against fierce Afridi tribesmen, is one of the strangest trade routes of the world.

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Cuba's Sugar Bowl

SUGAR is one of the chief products under consideration by the ways and means committee of the House of Representatives. American producers have asked for higher tariff rates. Representatives of Cuban producers oppose higher tariff on sugar imported into the United States.

In one recent year the United States produced a million tons of sugar (mostly beet sugar), while Cuba sent us nearly four million tons of cane sugar. Sugar in the United States is one of many products; sugar in Cuba dominates agriculture more than wheat and corn dominate American farms. Cuba is the "sweetest" nation in the world. In 1926-27 its 1,600,000 acres of sugar plantations produced four and a half million tons of sugar.

Sugar is king in the Pearl of the Antilles as surely as cotton is king in Georgia or Texas. The cane is raised by tenants on shares, by independent farmers who get a part of the resultant sugar, and by huge sugar companies who own the crushing plants or "centrals." The industry revolves around these centrals, which are established in the cane country. Railroads are built from the fields to the great factories, and during the half year harvesting season locomotives puff away constantly, pulling their long trains of cane-laden cars to feed the maws of the great crushing machines.

Add Whitewash to Purify Cane Juice

A vast area is required to furnish material to the largest centrals. The fields in the surrounding country are planted at different dates so that one will mature as another is exhausted. One of the greatest centrals uses cane from 250 acres each day.

In harvesting, the cane cutters strip the leaf blades from the standing cane and throw them on the ground for a mulch. The stripped stalks are then cut and loaded into oxcarts which haul them to the field railways. Each car holds 20 tons. When thirty cars have been loaded the train steams off to the central.

Once the cane is in the cars, human labor is minimized. At the most modern plants the cars are turned over and emptied mechanically. Belt conveyors then move the cane directly to the crushing rolls. The flow of the stalks through the rolls is regulated by an operator who manipulates an electric key-board. After the first pressing the cane passes through other sets of rollers, each time under greater pressure. The "bagasse," the crushed residue of the cane, as it issues from the last rolls, is tinder dry and is used as fuel for operating the mills.

In the meantime the juice has been collected, strained, and pumped into tanks at the top of the central buildings. Then milk of lime—really whitewash—is added. This neutralizes the acidity of the juice and causes impurities to sink to the bottom. The mixture is heated, and other impurities rise to the top.

Merry-go-round Machine Removes Molasses

The clear juice is drawn off, filtered, passed through batteries of evaporators, and finally crystallizes in vacuum pans. It is whirled in centrifugal machines to remove the molasses, and the resultant, slightly moist brown sugar is sacked and sent on its way to the refineries of the United States.

Cuba's sugar exports run over 4,500,000 tons annually, and with the high

UMI

in his garden. In 1903 King Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia were murdered in their palace. This structure of ill omen was demolished and a new palace built for the king of a different dynasty who succeeded to the throne.

Bulletin No. 3, February 4, 1929.

© *Photograph by Nox McCain*

THE ROYAL PALACE, BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA

When the cabinet ministers came down to their offices in Belgrade recently they found the doors locked. The government had been facing difficulties which the cabinet and the legislature seemingly could not solve. King Alexander announced that he would take over the reins and run the nation.

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Kauri Gum, Important Product of New Zealand

IT IS important news to varnish and paint manufacturers and users that a new process for the extraction of kauri gum from living trees, roots and branches has been introduced into New Zealand which yields a product, it is claimed, superior to fossil kauri gum.

And what is kauri gum?

It takes a historian, a naturalist, a geographer, a traveler, and an artist to answer that question fully.

The historian will say: "When Captain James Cook discovered New Zealand he mentioned in his journal that the natives wore amber-like beads. Years later kauri fossil gum, a curiosity, was brought by a whaling ship to London, where it was dissolved in oil and first used as varnish."

A Boon for Spillers of Water on Tables

The naturalist will say: "A few kauri trees grow to-day in New Zealand, survivors of a great forest which has been dead some 3,000 years. The living remnants grow miles north of the digging district—magnificent trees towering 150 feet high and spreading 6 yards through at the base. The stately kauri, like its American cousin pines, grows branches at the top of a clean trunk. New Zealand protects these kauri pines by law, although the gum which exudes from bark wounds has not had the same money-earning properties as the fossil gum mellowed in the swampy burial ground of the ancient kauri forest."

The geographer will say: "When you spill water on your wife's favorite table kauri gum may save you. Fossil kauri resin in high grade varnishes protects fine surfaces. Four years ago the United States paid New Zealand $2,300,000 annual tribute for ten million pounds of kauri gum, but our imports have fallen off. Why? High prices have compelled manufacturers to look for substitutes, synthetic gums and the "copals" which are fossil gums from the Congo Valley, Zanzibar, the Gold Coast and Madagascar. China tung oil from far up the Yangtze is a close competitor."

The traveler will say: "The job of a kauri gum digger is difficult. Once the statuesque Maori natives worked the deposits. Except for a few old-timers, they have wisely surrendered the task to Dalmatians from Yugoslavia. Each digger owns a long iron rod which he drives into the swamp mud, feeling again and again for lumps of kauri gum. It is a gamble whether the prospector will find a lump as large as a cow, or a few chips, or—nothing. With weakening markets the diggers' narrow margin of subsistence dwindled until the government had to create the Kauri Gum Control Board. It hopes to rescue the trade and 3,000 diggers, their wives and ragged children."

Varnish Used to Be Made from Amber

The artist will say: "Kauri gum has one peer, amber. We treasure amber beads, but we never think of them as an element in the world's finest varnish. Herr Rembrandt and Signor Stradivari knew the secret. The fossil resin amber from Koningsberg on the Baltic Sea both Rembrandt and Stradivari melted into varnish which has saved the master paintings of one and the magic notes of the violins of the other for us to enjoy."

Bulletin No. 5, February 4, 1929.

UMI

postwar prices of 1920 the island received approximately $725,000,000 for its crop. In late years the annual harvest has brought a money return less than half that figure.

Cuba's sugar industry and that of the rest of the Western World had its roots in India. Until the East was opened up some four centuries ago the West knew nothing of sweetening substances. Then British traders brought to London a queer, white, sweet material which was dubbed "Indian salt." The plant from which it came was found in Bengal. Under the urge of civilized man's sweet tooth it was soon growing in the hot belt entirely around the world. No region has proved better suited to its culture than Cuba.

Bulletin No. 4, February 4, 1929.

© *Photograph from F. W. B. Hogge*

FROM THE CANE FIELDS TO THE RAILROAD

Transportation of cane to freight cars is not always easy. When the oxen drag the cart load of cane to the siding, the crane (to be seen above the heads of the two drivers) will lift the whole load at once and drop it into the waiting car. Such roads as this result from heavy rains common to eastern Cuba where as much as 3 inches of rain will fall in a single downpour.

© *Walter Burke*

A NATIVE NEW ZEALAND SHELL MANNED BY 30 MAORI OARSMEN

The Maori natives were the original kauri gum diggers, but the work now is largely in the hands of Dalmatian immigrants to New Zealand. Fossil kauri gum comes from a region south of the present southern limit of the kauri pine which would indicate that New Zealand once had a warmer climate than it now enjoys.